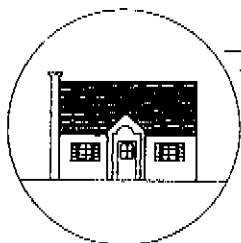


Community Conservation Strategy

Eastern Baltimore County Revitalization Strategy



Community Conservation

Community conservation was a term first used in the 1989-2000 Baltimore County Master Plan which referred to public and private efforts designed to maintain or enhance the physical, social, and economic resources of the County's older, urban area communities. Since the adoption of the Master Plan in 1990, the County has prioritized a number of issues that must be addressed if the Community Conservation Areas (CCAs) are to thrive. In July, 1995, the Office of Community Conservation was created to coordinate resources for the older areas of the County through cooperative public-private programs which address specific neighborhood concerns, and empower communities by fostering local self-reliance.

Eastern Baltimore County is made up of several neighborhoods and communities such as Dundalk, Essex, Middle River, Edgemere, Fort Howard, Lower Back River Neck, Bowleys Quarters, and Chase. Because of the great diversity of these communities, they have been further defined in this plan as Inner and Outer Community Conservation Areas. The Inner Community Conservation Areas are the high and moderately high density areas of Dundalk, Essex, and Middle River. Edgemere, Fort Howard, Lower Back River Neck, Bowleys Quarters and Chase comprise the waterfront Outer Community Conservation Areas of lower density, mostly single family detached housing. See Map 11.

Three of these communities --- Bowleys Quarters, Lower Back River Neck, and Essex - Middle River --- have completed plans that identify and address the specific issues facing them today. The Revitalization Strategy is based upon these plans and recommends an

overall approach for the conservation of Eastern Baltimore County's communities. The Strategy may also serve as a framework for further, more detailed plans by other communities in the area.

The interrelationships between community conservation and economic development cannot be over-emphasized and must be recognized in this Strategy and other community plans and programs. Stable, safe, and attractive communities with good schools and quality of life amenities such as parks and recreational facilities are an integral factor in keeping and attracting businesses to Eastern Baltimore County. The community conservation strategy focuses on actions that create partnerships with government and the residential and business communities to enhance the neighborhoods of Eastern Baltimore County and to provide the necessary "human service infrastructure" to enable residents to take advantage of new employment opportunities.

INNER COMMUNITY CONSERVATION AREAS

The inner communities of Essex, Middle River, and Dundalk were developed as housing for the workforce of Bethlehem Steel and the Glenn L. Martin Company. Dundalk was developed with a mix of housing types, a large commercial center, schools, neighborhood parks, and public buildings such as a library and recreation center built by Bethlehem Steel and later conveyed to the County. Old Dundalk has obtained historical



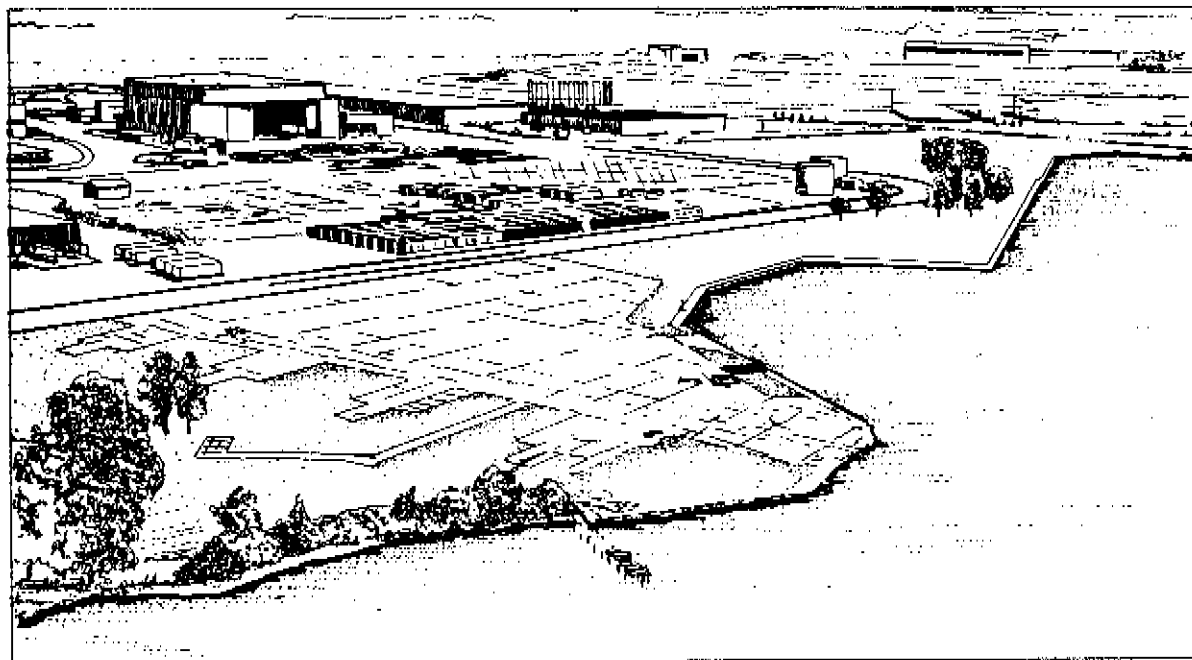


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designation and just celebrated 100 years as a community. Essex and Middle River were developed much later as a result of World War II. Early plans of Glenn L. Martin for Middle River included skyscrapers, stadiums, large parks, and wide boulevards. However, these plans never materialized and communities such as Riverdale, Victory Villa, Aero Acres, and Mars Estates grew up very quickly as migrants from all over the country settled in Middle River to work in the Glenn L. Martin Company factories during the early 1940s. Martin did supply his work force with amenities such as a library, community center, care centers, and recreational opportunities. Some of these amenities are still in use today as county owned and maintained public buildings. Eventually, the detached and semi-detached houses in these communities were sold off by the federal government to homeowners after the war. Very few homes are in their original state, with most having been renovated and expanded to accommodate larger families. Rental communities such as

Riverdale, Mars Estates (now the Village of Tall Trees), and Victory Villa Gardens continue to be inhabited by families, although in many cases the units are out-dated. The result is that government sponsored "temporary" housing has become permanent in many of these Inner Community Conservation neighborhoods.

As the world economy began to change, so did these stable working class neighborhoods. Bethlehem Steel once employed 30,000 people and now employs under 5,300. The Glenn L. Martin Company, now Lockheed Martin, employs about 1,200 workers compared to its war-time high of 50,000. Except for the poorest, nearly every census tract in the southeastern sector between 1980 and 1990 lost population. Lower paying service jobs replaced high paying manufacturing jobs. The median household income for Baltimore County is \$38,000 compared to that in Essex of \$25,000 and Middle River of \$27,000.





In 1994, Essex-Middle River was designated as a priority action area because of the number of risk factors that were found in the area such as the incidences of poverty, crime, unemployment, educational attainment, etc. The prevalence of these issues called for a comprehensive approach to the problems facing the area. During the summer of 1995, a community conservation plan was developed for the Essex-Middle River area which outlined a comprehensive set of recommendations for community and government action.

The following actions are recommended as a strategy to begin to reverse the downward spiral and to support, enhance and conserve the many assets available in the Inner Community Conservation Areas. Although there is no community conservation plan specifically for Dundalk, many of the issues identified and addressed in the Essex-Middle River plan also apply to Dundalk. These recommendations center around the issues of infrastructure, housing, transportation, education, public safety, recreation, leadership development, human services, economic opportunities, commercial revitalization, land use, and the image of the community.

POLICIES

Selective down zoning of vacant property, and redevelopment of several sites in the eastern part of the County should be considered as part of a comprehensive approach to improving the quality of life and breaking up the pockets of poverty. Sites such as Riverdale and Chesapeake Village have already been slated for demolition to make way for more of a mix of for sale housing types. The development and support of community leadership within these neighborhoods is crucial to improving conditions. Creating an advocacy for

the older neighborhoods through partnerships with government and community will serve to stabilize these Inner Community Conservation Areas.

INFRASTRUCTURE

Aging infrastructure is a county-wide problem in urbanized areas. Deteriorating streets, sidewalks, alleys, schools, parks, and sewer and water lines can erode the quality of life in older neighborhoods. As the chart in Appendix B shows, significant funds have been allocated for capital improvements in Community Conservation Areas. Local community associations and business groups need to work with the County to ensure that public infrastructure is rehabilitated and maintained.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Include Communities in CIP Process

The Planning Board should ensure that communities have input on the prioritization of capital projects. The Board, working with the local elected officials and the community umbrella organizations such as the Greater Dundalk Community Council and the Essex-Middle River Civic Council, should create a process for meaningful community input on capital projects.

2. Increase Recreational Activities

Additional recreational activities should be considered for the Inner Community Conservation Areas. These neighborhoods fall short of open space when compared to their population. This is especially true in the Essex-Middle River area where most of the open space is associated with the neighborhood



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schools. The County should move to acquire and develop some of the vacant land in the area for conversion to active recreation pursuits.

3. Convert Vacant Buildings into Community Centers

There are several vacant buildings within the Inner Community Conservation Areas which could be used as community centers. These buildings in many cases have become a blight on a community. The County should consider public-private partnerships or encourage non-profit groups to acquire these buildings for community oriented service.

4. Develop Streetscape Plans

A streetscape plan should be considered for major commercial arteries such as North Point Boulevard, Eastern Boulevard, and Martin Boulevard. The image portrayed by these commercial corridors often affects the way people think and feel about the residential communities that lay behind them. In the case of these three arteries, the image of the entire community is negatively affected by the unattractiveness of roadways. The County should aggressively pursue funds through the State's Consolidated Transportation Plan's revitalization funds to improve the image, pedestrian access, and safety of these roadways.

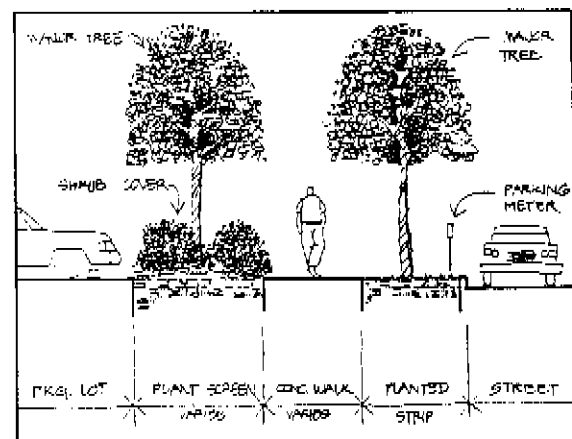
5. Maintain Older Infrastructure

General maintenance for older infrastructure should be given priority in capital budgets. The condition of the alleys, curb and gutter, sidewalks, and roadways in the Community Conservation Areas also leads to a poor image of the neighborhoods. Flooding, sewer back-

ups, and low water pressure are also common complaints in the older areas.

6. Limit Industrial and Commercial Truck Traffic on Residential Roads

Truck traffic generated by new as well as established industrial and commercial uses must be limited on residential roads. Alternative routing and/or improvements to local infrastructure must occur to protect the quality of life of the existing residential communities. The communities along Wise Avenue, Ebenezer Road, Earls Road, and Old North Point Road have been identified as experiencing problems with truck traffic. The Office of Planning with the Office of Community Conservation and Department of Economic Development must work with the communities, businesses, and the State to develop practical solutions that protect communities and enable economic development.





HOUSING

Although the percentage of home ownership in some of the neighborhoods in Essex-Middle River and most of the neighborhoods in Dundalk is above the County average, much of the area is characterized by older housing selling for substantially less than the county-wide average. These "hand-me-down" homes are perceived to be less desirable than new housing in the growth areas and neighboring counties. Rental housing also makes up a large percentage of the housing market. Nearly 50% of the housing available in Essex-Middle River is rental. The rental housing in Dundalk is concentrated in older complexes along Dundalk Avenue and the town center and accounts for about 30% of the housing market. There is a need to stabilize the rental market without adding to it and a need to offer assistance to those seeking to buy homes in the area.

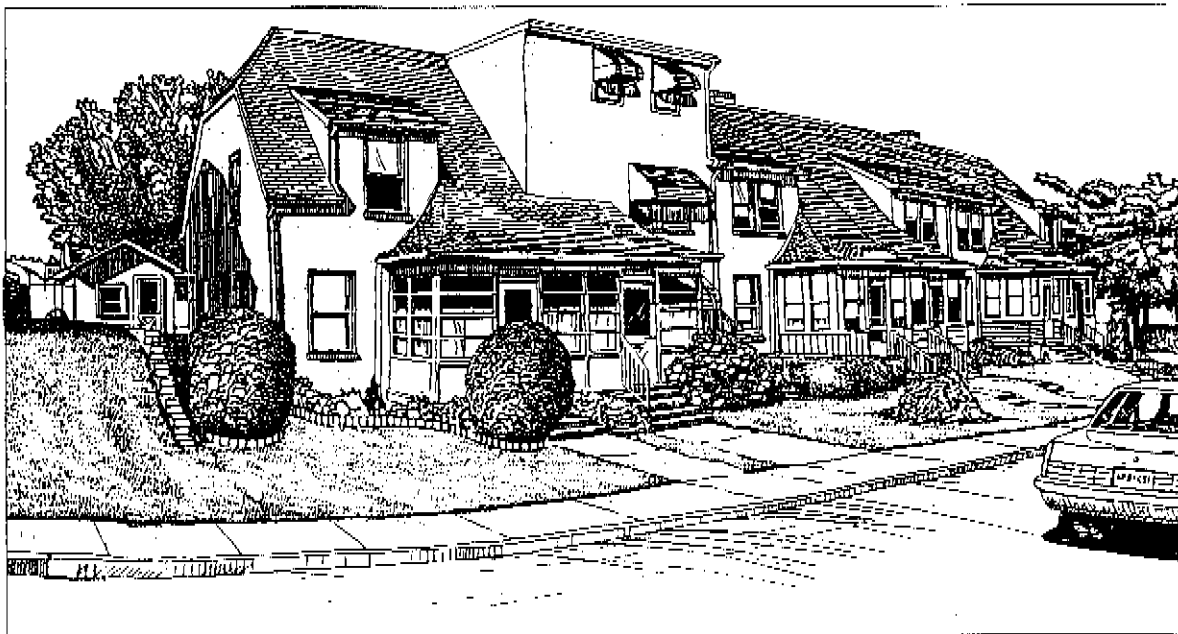
There are numerous issues associated with rental complexes. Crime, poverty, and poor

living conditions often characterize these neighborhoods. A comprehensive approach should be undertaken to deal with the problems associated with each complex and to lessen the impact that these communities have on surrounding, more stable areas.

RECOMMENDATIONS

I. Expand Home Ownership Programs

The County should expand its home ownership programs to include those buyers with higher income levels to promote a greater mix of incomes in the area. The expansion of these programs should include a partnership with area lenders to market the various loan products such as loans that can be made for "handy-man specials". Intervention buying and acquisition-rehabilitation strategies should also be developed to protect older communities from speculators.





Community Conservation

2. Establish an Eastern Housing Office

A local housing office for the eastern side of the County should be established as a focal point for all the housing assistance programs available to residents. This office could be done in cooperation with area lenders and real estate agencies.

3. Expand Services at Rental Complexes

Large rental complexes should be required to offer services to their residents such as the state funded Service Linked Housing Program. Resident advocates serve as links and conduits between the individuals and families and the government services available to them. The County should assist in funding this type of position.

4. Expand Code Enforcement for Rental Properties

Code enforcement activities should be expanded to handle the livability issues associated with older rental properties. Through the cross-training program organized by the Department of Permits and Development Management, problem properties should be targeted for special enforcement efforts by a team of county agencies that should include code enforcement inspectors, police, fire, and social service departments.

5. Require Private Security for Large Rental Complexes

Large rental complexes should be required to supply their own private security and file a defensible space plan with the county police department. Many rental communities have hired their own security forces that work in partnership with the county police. This partnership has shown to reduce street crime in these complexes. Lighting, fencing, and ap-

propriate landscaping in large complexes would help police in the apprehension of offenders and also create a safer environment for residents.

TRANSPORTATION

Many residents in the older communities are dependent upon public transportation. Creating employment centers in White Marsh, Owings Mills, and Hunt Valley did little for the residents of Eastern Baltimore County because of the lack of transportation to these areas. A fifteen minute trip by car is often the equivalent of a two hour trip by bus.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Expand Cross County Transit Service

The County should work with the MTA to expand cross county service and cross community service. A few years ago a study was done of the area by the Metropolitan Council of Governments that called for a shuttle service to community colleges, health institutions, and job centers. Although the MTA was sympathetic at the time, new leadership and fiscal constraints have impeded the implementation of this plan.

2. Improve Recreational Access

There are several regional parks in the eastern part of the County, but it appears that those parks are out of reach to families without private transportation. The Recreation Council and the Department of Recreation and Parks should determine if accessibility is affecting the use of these parks. School buses and other means of transportation should be investigated to get children off the streets and into recreation centers and parks.



EDUCATION

The health of the neighborhood school plays a crucial role in a family's decision to move to an area or away from an area. Instability in the neighborhoods that surround the schools are reflected in the number of children receiving free or reduced meals, test scores, mobility rates, and attendance rates. Two of the best assets of the County are the library system and the community college network. The Board of Education should become partners with them and the community to develop strategies to address these serious issues and encourage life-long learning. Parental involvement is the critical element in any educational program and it will be difficult to make any improvements without a family emphasis on learning.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Establish Goals for Attendance and Mobility Rates

Goals for increasing attendance and reducing mobility rates should be set for all area schools. The Board of Education should actively support these goals by creating the partnerships necessary to reduce mobility and to meet state standards for satisfactory attendance.

2. Use Elementary Schools as Mini-Community Centers

Elementary schools should be utilized as mini-community centers. Parental involvement is an essential ingredient to a child's education. Services that could develop parental involvement include parenting skills classes, computer lab access, and special events designed for family entertainment.

PUBLIC SAFETY

Public safety is an issue that most closely impacts the quality of life in a community. The perception that certain communities are unsafe makes it difficult to attract and keep responsible citizens. Juvenile crime is also an issue in the eastern sector of the County. Thirty percent of all juvenile arrests in Baltimore County are made in Precinct 11 (Essex) and Precinct 12 (North Point). Citizen on Patrol groups have grown in number in recent years in response to the increase in criminal activity in some neighborhoods.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Support and Maintain Citizen on Patrol Groups

Citizen on Patrol groups should be supported and maintained. The County should continue to support this type of citizen effort through crime prevention grants and training programs.

2. Develop Juvenile Delinquency Prevention Plans

Juvenile delinquency prevention plans should be created to identify issues and the resources available. Community service programs and parental counseling should be considered as a way to deter juvenile offenders.

RECREATION

The Baltimore County Department of Recreation and Parks and its member recreation councils attract a great number of the County's youth to its programs. This is due to



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the types of programs offered and the use of accessible neighborhood facilities such as school sites. Within recreation councils, new programs can be initiated simply by naming a responsible adult to “chair” the program. In stable communities, this process is extremely successful. In areas where parents may not be as involved in the lives of their children or income limits the ability of children to participate in programs, the system falls short. The County needs to think differently about the programming offered and the idea that one must “pay to play”. With the rise in juvenile crime not only in the eastern sector but county-wide, the County must do a better job at reaching at-risk youth. Activities for children, regardless of the ability to pay, must be supported by the County as a prevention tool for juvenile delinquency.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Fund Leadership Development

Leadership of local recreational programs should be sustained by public and private funding. Local programs in the older low-income areas lack the sort of funding and volunteerism found in wealthier communities. Without adequate appropriate programming and adult leadership, increased juvenile crime and the formation of gangs are definite possibilities. The County and its many volunteers should design a fundraising strategy to bring more resources to the older, poorer neighborhoods.

2. Expand Outreach Efforts for Recreational Activities

Develop a marketing strategy that attracts children regardless of their ability to pay.

Traditionally, recreation councils have not turned away children because they cannot pay, but this is not marketed well and many children and parents feel that these programs are beyond their means. More outreach should be done by the recreation councils to include children in low income areas. The Department of Recreation and Parks should market their programs through the many apartment complexes in the area to encourage participation in programs by children from low income families.

3. Maintain Parks

Just as there is a need to maintain the physical infrastructure of alleys, curbs, and sidewalks, parks are an integral part of a community's infrastructure and should be maintained as well. The Department of Recreation and Parks and the Office of Community Conservation should structure a program that funds the maintenance of these parks on a continual basis.





4. Expand At-Risk Youth Programs

The Police Athletic League (PAL) and the Department of Recreation and Parks should work together to bring appropriate resources and programming to at-risk youth. Facilities and programs should be supported by the County as a way to provide a positive way for the police and juveniles to interact. PAL centers should be initiated in every precinct throughout Baltimore County.

LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

Creating an advocacy for the older communities is necessary to reverse many of the downward trends seen in these areas. Without a solid, vocal constituency pressing for public reinvestment and allocation of resources to

such areas, the effort to prevent further decline is unlikely to succeed. Leadership development in the older communities is the linchpin that will sustain the effort. The County should encourage and coordinate partnerships to train, recruit, and support volunteers from the community.

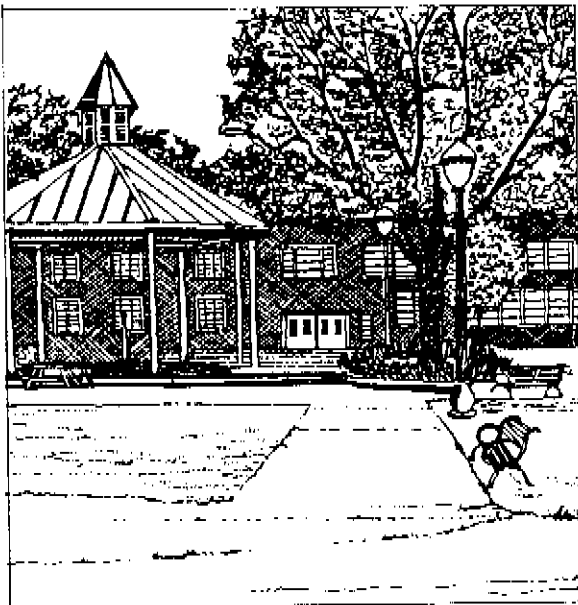
RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Train Local Civic Leaders

Leaders from the education community should assist in the development of training programs for civic associations and community organizations. Volunteers from the community colleges and public schools should create a training program for civic leaders that would maximize their skills and widen their perspectives in dealing with the issues facing them as a community.

2. Improve Information Dissemination

The County should coordinate the dissemination of information about the wide range of services available to communities. There are hundreds of programs and services which could benefit communities and businesses, but unfortunately, this information does not always reach its target market. County directories should be made more user friendly so that problem solving can be made easier and the "run-around" so typical of government is reduced.



HUMAN SERVICES

Many social pathologies are evident in the eastern sector of the County. The County's social service roles are the highest in the Es-



Community Conservation

sex office, the number of people waiting for a Section 8 housing voucher is the highest in the Essex area, and the crime data indicates that there is a thriving drug market on the east side. Family violence, health problems usually associated with poverty, and births to teens are also prevalent in many of the neighborhoods. These issues are compounded by the lack of public transportation and knowledge of services available to county residents. Services need to be accessible and duplication of resources should be eliminated in order to maximize the effectiveness of such programs. This will mean greater coordination by County agencies and partnerships with non-profits to foster self sufficiency and a better quality of life for residents.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Make Health and Social Services More Community Based

Health and social services should become more community based and proactive. Model projects such as the multi-service center in the Village of Tall Trees in Essex should be evaluated and replicated for use in other rental communities that are experiencing the same issues. In the case of the Tall Trees community center, a building was renovated to accommodate public and private service providers who offer a wide variety of essential services to the community.

2. Evaluate Need for Additional Substance Abuse Programs

A substance abuse task force should evaluate the need for additional substance abuse programs in the community. Arrest data and substance abuse treatment data indicates that

there is a prevalence of drug activity on the east side. An evaluation should be made to determine gaps in current services for those who are seeking treatment for substance abuse.

LAND USE

Proper land use promotes stability and controlled growth. There are many factors that affect land use, of which zoning is only a portion. The eastern area of the County is the most densely developed of any area in Baltimore County. One only needs to look at a zoning map of the County to see the intensity and density of the zoning when compared to other areas. There is an overabundance of apartment zoning in the Inner Communities on vacant land. Public infrastructure cannot support this kind of growth. Rehabilitation and redevelopment have become much more practical than new construction. The proximity to the Chesapeake Bay helps to limit the kind of housing currently in place in many communities, but additional constraints may be warranted to reverse the low income housing trends in the area. A mix of housing type and income level must be promoted.

RECOMMENDATION

1. Inventory Vacant Land

An inventory of residentially zoned and commercially/industrially vacant land should be made with appropriate uses selected for the properties. Compatibility with existing neighborhoods is extremely important and should be a major consideration when dealing with infill development or the expansion of business and industry. The Comprehensive Zon-



ing Map Process should be used to evaluate these properties, and particular emphasis should be placed on promoting single family home ownership opportunities to encourage middle income families to move into the area and diversify the income mix of the communities.

COMMERCIAL REVITALIZATION/ SMALL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

The older, main street retail areas and commercial corridors in Eastern Baltimore County are facing serious revitalization challenges. Neighborhood shopping centers such as Essex and Dundalk village which were once the suppliers of goods and services for the area's residential communities have become stressed in light of the development of shopping malls and retail warehouses. The continued out-migration of population - particularly higher income residents - to new outlying developments has further hurt the eastside's commercial corridors by draining the area's buying power. Stagnating property values offer little incentive for renovation or redevelopment of vacant and under-utilized properties, and much of the area has difficulty in retaining and attracting stabilizing businesses.

The diversity of commercial areas in Eastern Baltimore County presents another significant economic development challenge. Issues facing small neighborhood business centers are different from those of auto-oriented commercial corridors. Market dynamics in the Dundalk area vary from those on Eastern Boulevard. The revitalization strategy should address this diversity by continuing to respond to the needs of businesses throughout these

areas, while strategically targeting key commercial communities for intense activity and assistance. This focus will direct all of the necessary resources for successful revitalization - physical improvements, targeted business assistance, and increasing the capacity of the local business organizations - to those areas best positioned at the time for stabilization and growth.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Promote Small Businesses

The County should examine the array of incentives used nationwide to encourage investment in Eastern Baltimore County's older commercial areas. As a first step, the parameters of the Revitalization Tax Credit should be expanded to make all small businesses in the Community Conservation Areas of Eastern Baltimore County eligible for a five-year abatement from additional taxes on improvements made to the property. The various loan funds on the State and County level (See Appendix D) should be aggressively marketed by government officials and the banking industry to provide much-needed gap financing for these businesses. Additionally, a Small Business Advocate has been designated in the County's Department of Permits and Development Management to directly assist with County permits and development regulations. The Eastern Baltimore Area and Essex-Middle River Chambers of Commerce should continue as the first points of business contact, acting as the clearinghouse for information on State and County programs including public financing and business counseling services.



Community Conservation

2. Allocate Funds to Reinforce Efforts in North Point Corridor

Capital funds should be allocated for the North Point Corridor to position the County to leverage key public/private redevelopment opportunities that may arise. Funds could be used for needed infrastructure improvements such as traffic signals, stormwater management, some land acquisition, etc.

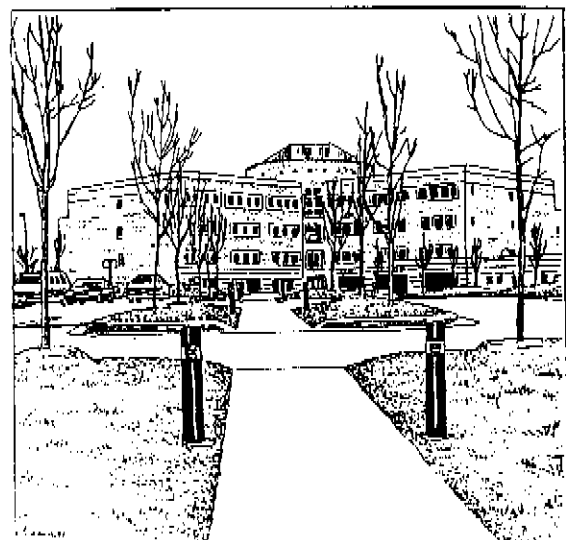
3. Develop a Commercial Revitalization Program for Essex-Middle River

Capitalizing on the public and private efforts already underway in this area, a comprehensive revitalization program should be developed that focuses on reversing the significant decline in commercial base in the Essex central business district and along the Eastern Boulevard corridor from Route 702 to Martin Boulevard. This may serve as a model for other revitalization programs in Eastern Baltimore County. Key components of the program should be:

- An aggressive plan of business assistance with the goal of retaining those businesses which currently support the area. County efforts targeting "at risk" business should be coordinated with those of the Essex Development Corporation and Essex-Middle River Chamber of Commerce to provide counseling, financing assistance, and access to the other resources in the business assistance network.
- An evaluation of the level and need for different commercial activity for Essex and Eastern Boulevard. Changing trends over the past two decades requires new analysis of such issues as the mix of existing businesses, property availability,

infrastructure status, real estate activity, and general demographics in the Essex-Middle River area. Business uses which were desirable a decade ago may no longer meet the needs of the current marketplace. A baseline assessment should be completed which analyzes these issues and identifies the greatest economic opportunities for new and existing businesses.

- A marketing program to attract new business. The County should work with the local business organizations and members of the real estate community to promote the Essex and Eastern Boulevard market area. The Commercial Revitalization Program should establish a real estate Roundtable to regularly convey property activity information, market the public and private resources available to businesses, and network about new opportunities in the area. Additionally, the Program should develop a solid





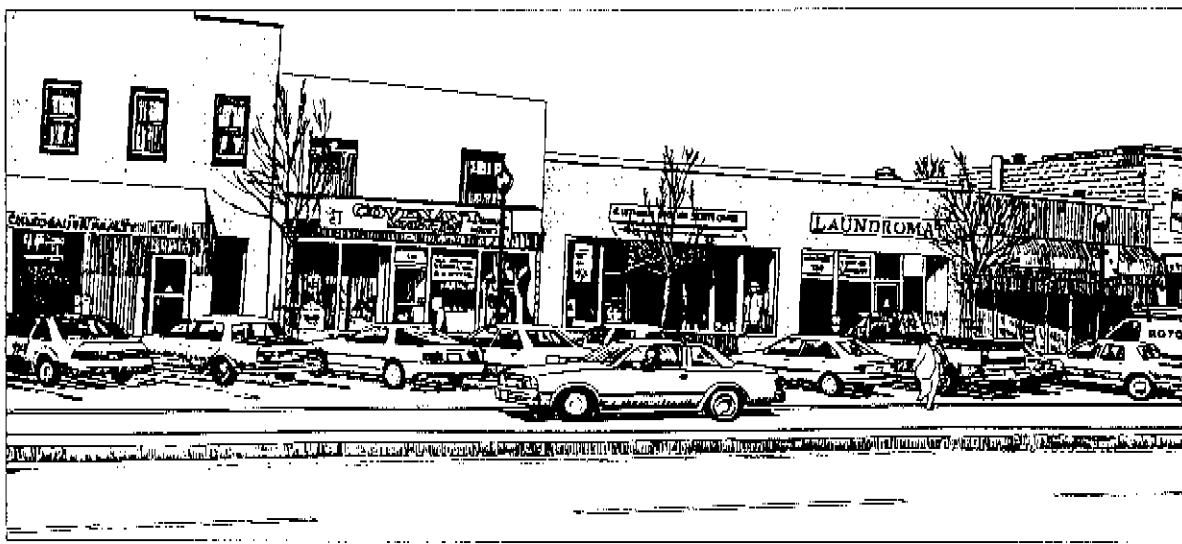
relationship with key commercial site selection specialists to understand site criteria and direct potential businesses to the Eastern Boulevard corridor. The Commercial Revitalization Program should also take a leading role in encouraging the redevelopment of key vacant or underutilized properties, identifying opportunity sites, and organizing property interests.

Support for the Essex Development Corporation and the Essex-Middle River Chamber of Commerce. The ultimate success of commercial revitalization lies in the vision and strength of the business community and the County should work to prepare both of these organizations to assume a greater role in the management of local business issues activities. Improvement of physical conditions and aesthetics in the Essex-Middle River commercial areas. Physical improvements to infrastructure, properties, and building facades can be a highly effective way to create development opportunity and attract private investment. Capital funds should be provided to leverage redevelopment of key properties. To

achieve maximum benefit, these capital resources should be used in conjunction with other economic development tools and incentives. The County should continue to provide the Architect-On-Call program to provide businesses free assistance in designing and implementing building improvements. The Baltimore County Business Improvement Loan Fund (BILF) should be offered to businesses along Eastern Boulevard, making personal loans up to \$10,000 available for property/building improvements.

IMAGE OF THE COMMUNITY

The image of a community and the access to amenities are important reasons why businesses and residents chose to locate in a certain area. Older communities are in competition for new jobs and new residents with every other community in the metropolitan area and that they must be able to address the questions of why stay here and why move here. Marketing and promotion of these areas becomes essential in attracting and keeping a strong economic base.



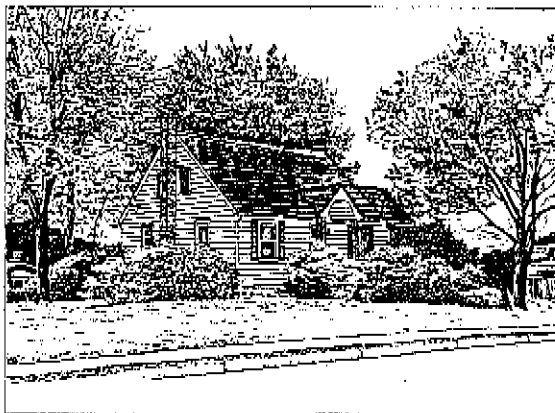


Community Conservation

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Develop Marketing Material for Home Buyers

A marketing packet should be produced for potential home buyers. Homes in Baltimore County are a very good value and there are many desirable neighborhoods. This asset needs to be marketed properly through lenders and real estate agents throughout the region.



OUTER COMMUNITY CONSERVATION AREAS

The Outer Community Conservation Areas (CCAs) in Eastern Baltimore County are predominantly lower density neighborhoods of single-family detached housing located in the lower ends of the peninsulas and oriented toward the water. For purposes of this Strategy, they are generally known as the communities of North Point Peninsula, Lower Back River Neck, Bowleys Quarters, and Chase-Harewood. The North Point Peninsula communities of Edgemere, Fort Howard, Lodge Forest, Todd's Farm, and Millers Island surround the 1,300 acre North Point Peninsula Park formerly owned by Bethlehem Steel. This area has a strong historical background as the site of the Battle of North Point during the War of 1812. Across Back River is the very rural area of Lower Back River Neck. Sewer service is only now being extended to the small residential enclaves scattered around the neck. All of this area falls within the Chesapeake Bay Critical Area with over 1,000 acres in the center being classified as a Habitat Protection Area. There are also two county owned parks --- Rocky Point with its 18 hole golf course, swimming beach, picnic area, and the historic Ballestone Manor House and the environmentally sensitive Pottery Farm Road Park. Bowleys Quarters is a mix of housing types and densities, with the upper neck developed with a shopping center, a large well maintained manufactured housing development, and an extensive townhouse development. The lower neck is predominately single family development all along the shoreline with undeveloped land in the center. The residential communities of Chase and Harewood are the most eastward, with older well established neighborhoods toward the water and new single family developments further



inland. These communities border the Bird River and the Gunpowder River and are adjacent to the Dundee-Salt peter Natural Environment Area and the Gunpowder State Park.

Although all of these communities are unique, they are facing similar issues. The strategic issues for Outer CCAs are defining and maintaining a community character, protecting the environment, and maintaining and improving the quality of new development and redevelopment. The Strategy identifies actions that all of the communities can take to address these overall issues and also serves as a framework for individual community plans that can be tailored to address specific needs. Two communities --- Lower Back River Neck and Bowleys Quarters --- have both written plans that were approved by the County Council in 1993 and 1992, respectively. The North Point Peninsula Communities are in the process of completing their plan for public review.

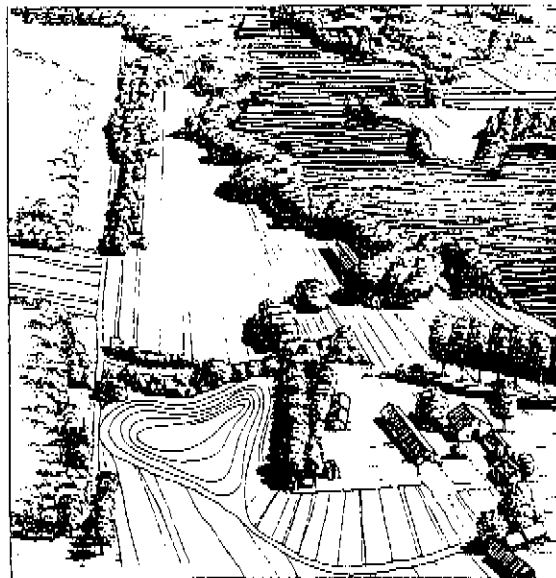
POLICIES

The special character and quality of life found in the Outer Community Conservation Areas should be reinforced and enhanced. Large scale new residential development in these areas should be discouraged, but compatible and higher quality redevelopment and infill development should be promoted. The extension of public utilities to resolve health issues should continue to receive priority within the County. The waterfront and public park systems are extremely important amenities for both the Outer CCAs and Eastern Baltimore County. The interrelationships between the Outer CCAs and the rest of the Eastern County, especially on waterfront issues, must be acknowledged and incorporated into any

decision making process. The County, residents, business interests, and development community must work together to balance the need to promote these communities as a premier location without harming the very qualities that make them so attractive.

COMMUNITY CHARACTER

The unique blend of small communities oriented toward the water and close to large parks and protected natural areas gives most of the Outer Community Conservation Areas a special rural community character. This distinction is reinforced by an almost intuitive sense of community, where residents and businesses are linked by similar culture, family background, employment history, and a love of the water. This issue is tied to many others, especially land use and waterfront enhancement and as such, the actions must be viewed together. The following are the first steps that can be taken to enhance the special character of the Outer Communities.





Community Conservation

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Establish A Community Identification Program

Local community associations, with County design and/or financial assistance through the Offices of Planning and Community Conservation, should establish a community identification program. As a first step, neighborhood identification signs should be placed at the gateways into the four main Outer CCAs. A beautiful example is the sign for Bowleys Quarters. These signs should be simple and reflect the character of the neighborhoods. This action, in combination with the waterfront identification signage program described in the "Waterfront Enhancement" chapter should help to establish a specific identity for the area and its neighborhoods.

A second step to promote an identity could be a marketing brochure, highlighting the qualities of the neighborhoods. The Eastern Baltimore Area Community Development Corporation should take the lead in this program, coordinating input from community associations and using business contacts for distribution. The brochure should be distributed to real estate agencies, personnel directors of major employers, the EBACDC, community associations, etc. This could be combined with tours for targeted groups to heighten their awareness and knowledge of the area. Community associations must take the lead in this program with possible grant assistance from the Office of Community Conservation.

2. Improve Communities' Physical Appearance

A universal theme in this Strategy is the visual improvement of the gateways and roadways to

enhance the image of the entire Eastern Area. This is not a major issue in the Outer CCAs, but communities need to be ever vigilant in maintaining their appearance. Community associations, civic groups such as the Boy or Girl Scouts, environmental groups, or elementary schools may consider initiating the following:

"Adopt a Road" with periodic clean ups and targeted plantings and trimming. Financial assistance may be available through the Office of Community Conservation for specific projects and through the Maryland Department of Natural Resources.

"Adopt a Pond" with neighborhoods cleaning up and maintaining stormwater management as well as natural ponds and wetlands.

Neighborhood Clean Ups. Again, financial assistance may be available through OCC and dumpsters can be arranged through grants to communities.

Review of Concept and Development Plans, Variances, and Special Exceptions. The focus should be on design issues such as the appearance of the building and parking from the street, landscaping, and signage. The Comprehensive Manual of Development Policies is an excellent reference for both the developer/designer and community associations.

Cooperative Code Enforcement. This is a partnership program with the County and community and business representatives to encourage voluntary compliance with existing regulations. This type of program is just beginning in the County and should be tailored to meet the specific needs of the community. It is described in more detail in the "Economic Development" chapter under "Southeastern



Employment Center". In general, code enforcement inspectors sweep an area to identify specific types of violations which are then forwarded to a business and residential community task force to resolve in conjunction with the violator. Unresolvable issues may be forwarded to the Department of Permits and Development Management for official action.

3. Develop a Community Events Program

The events programs in the Eastern Baltimore Area should be categorized, coordinated, and expanded to promote neighborhoods, instill community pride and spirit, and attract visitors. Each area is different and events should capitalize on the best attributes such as the history of North Point, the water (e.g. boat parades, races, marina tours, fishing events, etc.), house tours, the natural resources via the park system, etc. Events should be coordinated with other established activities and involve the residential, business, and recreational communities.

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

The Outer CCAs have a wealth of natural resources --- extensive tidal and nontidal wetlands, forests, habitat protection areas, and tidal waterways --- that contribute to the character and quality of life in the area. A number of laws such as the Chesapeake Bay Critical Area Act, the Forest Conservation Act, and the County's environmental regulations offer considerable protection of the area's natural resources from the impacts of new development. However, much of the development in the Outer CCAs predates these regulations as well as most standard development and zoning regulations. The most relevant environmental issue facing the Outer CCAs is how to address

and remediate the impacts of older development. The principal issue is water quality protection, including stormwater management, habitat restoration, and extension of public facilities to address health issues.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Extend Public Sewer and Water

After more than a decade of debate, the County will extend alternative conveyance sewer systems into Lower Back River Neck and Bowleys Quarters. Progress on this has been delayed by new permit requirements of the Army Corps of Engineers. Special Area Management Plans (SAMPs) to assess secondary impacts of development and wetland delineations are now required prior to the County applying for a permit. Subject to any new additional requirements, it is expected that systems on both necks will be operational by the year 2000.

2. Publicize Pumpout Facilities and Proper Boat Maintenance

The State of Maryland has secured funds through the federal Clean Vessel Act to provide 75% of the funding for the installation and maintenance of boat pumpouts. The State's own waterway improvement fund provides the remaining 25% so that the entire cost is grant funded. The State publishes a list of the locations of available pumpout facilities. The Marine Trades Association should take an active role in publicizing the availability of these pumpouts and the importance for all boaters to use them.

Marinas are also the best place to inform the public of proper boat maintenance procedures.



Community Conservation

The marina facility provides the boater with controlled places to sand and paint boat bottoms and do other minor maintenance procedures. The Marine Trades Association can inform the boater of the toxicity of many boating related materials and how to properly use them. Boaters should contact marina operators to complete repairs to boats which are not operating cleanly. Small releases of oil or other toxic materials become a pollution problem because of their cumulative impacts to the waterways.

3. Implement Water Quality Projects

The Department of Environmental Protection and Resource Management has an ongoing program of water quality capital projects to a) redress stormwater problems by removing sediment, reconstructing stream banks, controlling erosion, acquiring property, etc.; b) protect the shoreline through non-structural as well as structural improvements to stabilize the shoreline and reduce erosion and sedimentation; and c) restore streams by establishing vegetative buffers, creating and restoring in-stream habitat, maintaining streams, removing sediment, etc. Projects have already been completed in tributaries draining to Bear Creek, Jones Creek, North Point Creek, Back River, Sue Creek, and Middle River. Refer to the Capital Improvements Map in Appendix C.

LAND USE AND QUALITY OF DEVELOPMENT

All along the water, but especially in the Outer CCAs, there is a layer of strict environmental regulations, most notably the Chesapeake Bay Critical Area law, that controls almost all new

development and growth. However, with the extension of public facilities into Lower Back River Neck and Bowleys Quarters, some land within these necks may become developable on a very limited basis. The primary land use issues are how to promote 1) "higher end" redevelopment, 2) improvement of the existing housing stock, and 3) selected infill development on single lots that is compatible with the surrounding community.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Ensure Quality Development and Redevelopment

The County, through its development and zoning approval processes, should pay particular attention to the quality of proposed development in all Community Conservation Areas. In the Outer CCAs, the design and density of a project should be evaluated in terms of maintaining the character of the community, enhancing the image of the overall area, and improving, through redevelopment or renovation, the existing housing stock.

2. Identify and Improve or Redevelop Substandard Housing

Certain areas in Outer CCAs have substandard housing. The Offices of Planning and Community Conservation should identify these sites and enforce the livability code. Redevelopment of these areas should be encouraged.

3. Limit New Commercial Development

The County should reinforce the commercial uses in the Inner Community Conservation Areas by limiting new uses in the Outer CCAs. This action is aimed primarily at retail/service uses or nonmarine related businesses. Development linked to the waterfront,



such as small stores in marinas, restaurants, recreational uses, etc., should be evaluated on a case-by-case basis weighing the impact on the community with the improvement of waterfront uses. Applicants for new commercial zoning should provide documentation demonstrating how the request advances the goals and policies of this Strategy.

4. Expedite Single Home or Lot Improvement

Improvement of the existing residential housing market is a goal of this Strategy. In Outer CCAs, this often can be done on a single lot basis through landscaping, shoreline enhancement, or pier repair. The County has prepared amendments to the Critical Area requirements to facilitate home improvements. See the "Waterfront Enhancement" Chapter.

